

MM Docket No 01-235

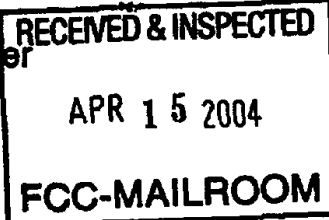
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475 Hudson Ave Apt. 1A  
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Honorable Kathleen Q. Albernathy,  
Commissioner, Federal Communications Commission,  
Washington, DC.

The 1996 Telecommunications Act implemented by the FCC gives extra spectrum to broadcasters, enabling them to create the multi-channeled cable world we have today. Title 2 concerning ownership has entitled any and all ownership to become unlimited in reference to the amount of stations owned by any given company.

The recent jump from 35-40% and a soon-to-be 45% is and will be a huge climb in terms of ownership. Originally enforcement of ownership relaxed beginning in the 1980's, however in this case it is taking a vacation. Since the changes brought about in the 1990's where companies began owning print and broadcast media outlets in the same cities, T.V. networks owning their own programming, film studios owning their own movie theaters, etc. there has been an effect on the industry in such a way that huge mergers and massive concentration have cut down on diversity in the media tremendously. A synergistic formation has since been built into the structure of ownership and as a result knocks down any attempt of competition by a local or smaller company making it impossible for them to compete and therefore losing claim.

If this increase in media ownership continues, a domination of the market will occur. By no means is synergy bad for the business of media, however smaller companies will be forced into a buy out/ sell out, or be forced to merge with into a joint venture with these media conglomerates, in order for them to get distribution.

The changes brought about by the FCC in Title 2 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996 will implement the following problems within the industry. Less diversity of content means a more homogenized product, multiple use of the same product means that there are fewer voices in the media space, loss of competition means that media will become more expensive, and media companies have the ability to gain too much political power which could result in a loss of confidence in politicians and media, therefore encouraging cynicism, and furthermore if an emphasis is placed on blockbusters, the media producers will not take risks leaving no space for art/high culture and creativity in the new media world only contributing to its downfall.

As a constant consumer of media and an undergraduate student aspiring a future profession within the media industry, I send to you this letter in hope that the proper changes towards more equal distribution of ownership, and more diversity will be made towards Title 2 of the Telecommunications Act. A need for stricter regulations and governing bodies is within the public's interest. The public are the media's source of income and our opinions shape the public sphere.

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Hopefully the content of this letter has made you think twice about what effects Title 2 and its new rules entail. The possible acts of regulating, governing, and grandfather clauses towards certain companies from further takeover in the ability to allow certain voices/bodies in the industry will make ownership a more democratic and diverse system.

I thank you dearly for your time and leave you now with a quote from Senator John McCain stating, "the changes being contemplated by the FCC right now are monumental and will shape the future of communication forever." Please take the Senators meaning behind this statement however you feel is necessary.

Michael Pensa

~~Undergraduate Student, University at Albany~~